Annexure-III

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI – 110 002

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN RESPECT OF MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT

1. Name of Principal Investigator : **Dr. NAMDEV KASHINATH PATIL**

2. Deptt. of Principal Investigator : **ENGLISH**

   Name of College : **R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya, Chandgad**

   Tal: Chandgad, Dist: Kolhapur (MS)

3. UGC approval Letter No. and Date : **File No. 23-1421/14 (WRO), dated on 20/02/2015**

4. Title of the Research Project : ***Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao***

5. Effective date of starting the project : **01/04/2015**

6. a. Period of Expenditure : **From 01/04/205 to 30/06/2017**

   b. Details of Expenditure :

S.No.	Item	Amount Approved (Rs.)	Expenditure Incurred (Rs.)
i.	Books & Journals	50,000/-	**50,064/-**
ii.	Equipment	20,000/-	**20,000/-**
iii.	Contingency including special needs	15,000/-	**15,250/-**
iv.	Field Work/Travel (Give details in the proforma).	10,000/-	**11,075/-**
v.	Others	10,000/-	**10,150/-**
	Total	**1,05,000/-**	**1,06,539/-**

7. If as a result of check or audit objection some irregularly is noticed at later date, action will be taken to refund, adjust or regularize the objected amounts.

8. It is certified that the grant of **Rs. 87,500/- (Rupees Eighty Seven Thousand Five Hundred only)** received out of the sanctioned amount **Rs.1,05,000/- (Rs. One Lakh Five Thousand only)** from the University Grants Commission under the scheme of support for Minor Research Project entitled **"Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao"** vide **UGC letter No. 23-1421/14 (WRO)**, dated on **20th February, 2015** has been fully utilized for the purpose for which it was sanctioned and in accordance with the terms and conditions laid down by the University Grants Commission.

Patil

SIGNATURE OF
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Dr.N.K.Patil
Principal Investigator
MRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

PRINCIPAL
(Seal)

Principal
R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya
Chandgad,Tal Chandgad Dist Kolhapur

Annexure-IV

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI – 110 002

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON FIELD WORK/TRAVEL

Name of the Principal Investigator: **Dr. Namdev Kashinath Patil**

Title of the Research Project: **Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao**

UGC approval Letter No. and Date: **No. 23-1421/14(WRO), dt. 20/02/2015**

A) First Year Expenditure:

Name of the Place Visited		Duration of the Visit		Mode of Journey	Number of Days	Expenditure Incurred (in Rs.)		
From	To	From	To			Fair (Rs. 6 Per Km)	D.A. (Rs.120/Day)	Total
Chandgad	Shivaji University, Klhapur	20/07/15	21/07/15	Car MH 12 FU 1294	02	280 Km X Rs 6 = 1680	Rs 120 X 2 = 240	1920
Chandgad	Shivaji University, Klhapur	18/09/15	19/09/15	Bus	02	Rs 125 X 2 = 250	Rs 120 X 2 = 240	490
Belgaum	EFLU Hyderabad	25/10/15	27/10/15	Travels	03	Rs 1362 + Rs 1150 + Rs 300 (Auto) = 2812	Rs 120 X 3 = 360	3172
Total Expenditure of the first year								**5582**

Signature of the Principal Investigator

Dr.N.K.Patil
Principal Investigator
MRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

Signature of the Registrar/Principal

Principal
R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya
Chandgad,Tal Chandgad Dist Kolhapur

Signature of the Statutory Auditor

CHANDRABHAGA PATIL & ASSOCIATES
C. K. PATIL
Mem. No. 150885
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Annexure-IV

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI – 110 002

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON FIELD WORK/TRAVEL

Name of the Principal Investigator: **Dr. Namdev Kashinath Patil**

Title of the Research Project: **Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao**

UGC approval Letter No. and Date: **No. 23-1421/14(WRO), dt. 20/02/2015**

B) Second Year Expenditure:

Name of the Place Visited		Duration of the Visit		Mode of Journey	Number of Days	Expenditure Incurred (in Rs.)		
From	To	From	To			Fair (Rs. 6 Per Km)	D.A. (Rs.120/Day)	Total
Chandgad	Shivaji University, Klhapur	29/05/16	30/05/16	Bus	02	Rs 115 + Rs 136 = 251	Rs 120 X 2 = 240	491
Belgaum	EFLU Hyderabad	17/07/16	19/7/16	Travels	03	Rs 1260 + Rs 1272 + Rs 190 (Auto) = 2722	Rs 120 X 3 = 360	3082
Chandgad	Shivaji University, Klhapur	16/01/17	17/01/17	Car MH 12 FU 1294	02	280 Km X Rs 6 = 1680	Rs 120 X 2 = 240	1920
Total Expenditure of the second year								**5493**

Total Expenditure:

A) Expenditure for the First Year : **Rs. 5,582/-**
B) Expenditure for the Second Year : **Rs. 5,493/-**
Total : Rs. 11,075/-

Certified that the above expenditure is in accordance with the UGC norms for Minor Research Projects.

Signature of the Principal Investigator
Dr.N.K.Patil
Principal Investigator
MRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

Signature of the Registrar/Principal
Principal
R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya
Chandgad, Tal Chandgad Dist Kolha

Signature of the Statutory Auditor
CHANDRABHAGA PATIL & ASSOCIATES
C. K. PATIL
Mem. No.
150885

Annexure-V

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI – 110 002

UTILIZATION CERITFICATE

Certified that the grant of **Rs. 1,05,000/-** (Rupees One Lakh Five Thousand only) has been sanctioned to **Dr. Namdev Kashinath Patil**, Assistant Professor in English, R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya, Chandgad, Tal. Chandgad, Dist. Kolhapur from the University Grants Commission under the scheme of support for Minor Research Project, entitled **"Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao"** vide UGC letter File **No: 23-1421/14 (WRO), dated on 20/02/2015**. Out of the sanctioned amount, Rs. 87,500/- (Rupees Eighty Seven Thousand Five Hundred only) has been received as the first instalment from University Grants Commission, WRO-Pune. The said received amount has been fully utilized for the purpose for which it was sanctioned and in accordance with the terms and conditions laid down by the University Grants Commission. The total expenditure incurred presently up to 31st March 2017 for the said Project of two years is **Rs. 1,06,539/- (Rupees One Lakh Six Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Nine only)**.

Signature of the
Principal Investigator
Dr.N.K.Patil
Principal Investigator
MRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

Signature of the
Principal
(Seal)
Principal
R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya
Chandgad,Tal Chandgad Dist Kolha

Signature of the
Statutory Auditor
(Seal)
CHANDRABHAGA PATIL & ASSOCIATES
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
C. K. PATIL
Mem. No.
150885

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI – 110 002

STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

1. Name of Principal Investigator : **Dr. NAMDEV KASHINATH PATIL**
2. Name of College : **R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya, Chandgad**
   Tal: Chandgad, Dist: Kolhapur (MS)
3. UGC approval Letter No. and Date : **No. 23-1421/14 (WRO), dated on 20/02/2015**
4. Title of the Research Project : ***Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao***
5. Date of starting the project : **01/04/2015**
6. Date of Completion of Project : **30/04/2017**

S.No.	Item	Sanctioned Amount (Rs.)	Received Amount	Expenditure Incurred (Rs.)		Total
				I[st] Year	II[nd] Year	
i.	Books & Journals	50,000/-	50,000/-	50,064/-	--	50,064/-
ii.	Equipment	20,000/-	20,000/-	20,000/-	--	20,000/-
iii.	Contingency including special needs	15,000/-	7,500/-	7,600/-	7,650/-	15,250/-
iv.	Field Work/Travel	10,000/-	5,000/-	5,582/-	5,493/-	11,075/-
v.	Others	10,000/-	5,000/-	5,000/-	5,150/-	10,150/-
Total		**1,05,000/-**	**87,500/-**	**88,246/-**	**18,293/-**	1,06,539/-

Principal
(Seal)
R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya
Chandgad,Tal.Chandgad Dist.
P.No 416509

Dr. N. K. Patil
Principal Investigator
UGRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

Chartered Accountant

CHANDRABHAGA PATIL & ASSOCIATES
C. K. PATIL
Mem. No. 150885
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Annexure-VI

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI – 110 002

Final Report of the work done on the Minor Research Project

(Report to be submitted within 6 weeks after completion of each year)

1.	Project report No. 1st / Final	:	**Final**
2.	UGC Reference No. F.	:	**No. 23-1421/14 (WRO), dated on 20/02/2015**
3.	Period of report:	:	**From 1st April, 2015 to 31st March, 2017**
4.	Title of the Research Project	:	***Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao***
5.	(a) Name of the Principal Investigator	:	**Dr. Namdev Kashinath Patil**
	(b) Deptt.	:	**English**
	(c) College where work has progressed	:	**R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya, Chandgad** **Tal: Chandgad, Dist: Kolhapur (MS)**
6.	Effective date of starting of the project	:	**1st April, 2015**

7. Grant approved and expenditure incurred during the period of the report:

a. Total amount approved Rs.	:	**1,05,000/-**
b. Total expenditure Rs.	:	**1,06,539/-**
c. Report of the work done: (Please attach a separate sheet)	:	**Separate sheet is attached**

Annexure-VI

REPORT OF THE WORK DONE

i. Brief objectives of the project:

- to understand the recent developments in Queer theory and to prepare the theoretical framework to analyse the select novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao.
- to make an overarching and all encompassing statement on the select novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao in the light of queer theoretical conceptions.

ii. Work done so far and results achieved and publications, if any, resulting from the work (Give details of the papers and names of the journals in which it has been published or accepted for publication):

During the two years period of the project, the general outline of the research work has been prepared. In the introductory part of the project work, the study makes clear the general objectives of research along with the significance of topic. The scope and limitations of the study as well as the methodology of the research work is also presented in the introduction. In the first chapter of the research work, the theoretical framework of the project has been prepared, where the attempts are made to conceptualize queer theoretical perspectives in the philosophical and literary context and generalizes certain maxims that can be used further for the analysis of the select novels. The investigations into the queer theoretical perspectives lead to point out the shifting boundaries, ambivalences, and cultural constructions of the sexuality which has been ever changing in the socio-cultural historical context. In order to understand the queer cultural perceptions an attempt is made to trace the origin and development of the queer theory, which further helps to scrutinize its definitions and explore thoroughly the philosophical endeavours that reveal the dynamics of queer phenomenon.

In the light of the theoretical frame, the second chapter has been prepared, where the select novels of Alan Hollinghurst viz. *The Swimming Pool Library* and *The Line of Beauty* are assessed. Hollinghurst's novel *The Swimming pool Library* reveals the gay life of its protagonist William who always attempts to cruise men and tries to establish homosexual relationships. It reveals the sexual relations between William and Arthur symbolically representing the dominations of upper class society over the lower class. It also presents the gay lives of William and Lord Nantwich which are similar to one another in so many aspects but marks two different periods in the historical development of queer perceptions. Hollinghurts's next novel under preview, *The Line of Beauty*, points out the homosexual life of its protagonist Nick, who unlike William belongs to the middle class society; and while living in the house of rich and having politically influential family called Fedden, always has the sense of inferiority. The dominance of Fedden's family obstructs his homosexual relationships with the men like Leo and Wani. However, he finally rejects the influence of heterosexual society and accepts homosexuality as the way of leading life.

In the third chapter of the research project, the select novels of R. Raj Rao viz. *The Boyfriend* and *Hostel Room 131* are scrutinized. R. Raj Rao's novel *The Boyfriend* deals with the gay sub-culture rooted in the city like Mumbai. The novel presents the story of forty years old gay journalist Yudi and his different homosexual encounters with numbers of men including nineteen years old young boy called Milind who is belonged to the Dalit community. Through the different events ranging from the separation of Yudi and Milind to the promiscuous urges in which Yudi is torn in between, the novel unfolds the efforts of escaping from the brutalities of the world. R. Raj Rao's next novel *Hostel Room 131* demonstrates the life of its gay protagonist Siddharth who is obsessed for Sudhir which leads him face alienation in the life. The homosexual

love affair leads him to assess the lives of hijara, who are illiterate but lives with the satisfaction as they are able to come out of their closet. He is forced to set his way of living apart from his soul mate Sudhir, which leads him to suffer with alienation. On the other hand, Sudhir understands that his homosexual desires are unacceptable in the society; so he opts for the sex reassignment surgery which finally unites him with his (her) lover Siddharth.

The forth chapter delineates the comparative perspective over the similarities and differences in the approaches of the two writers – Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao – in the articulations of queer cultural experiences in their literary artefacts. The select novels of both writers present gay sex love of its protagonists who are preoccupied with the homosexual desires. They attract towards black men belonged to the lower category for the gay sex and tries to control their lives forever. They are aware about their straight heterosexual identity which give them characters and prepares to live in the society. However, they also experience tribulations because of the domination of heterosexual society, which they ultimately reject to find solace in queerness.

The fifth chapter concludes the research work with some of the major findings. The select novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao successfully demonstrate the queer cultural perceptions of its characters, who intend to choose the gender role of their own choice rather than it is assigned by the social codes. The novels also demonstrate class conflict between upper and lower communities, homosexual and heterosexual categories which try to control and dominate the lives of the people. The characters of the select novels also find a sense of satisfaction and security in the homosexual world.

During the period of project work, two research papers have been published. The details of the publication are given below:

Sr No	Title of the Paper	Name of the Journal	Page No.
1.	Gay Culture Reflected in Hollinghurst's *The Swimming Pool Library*	Critical Space: A Peer-reviewed (refereed) International Journal in English Language and Literature, Vol. VI, Issue I, 2017	19-27
2.	Homosexuality in Hollinghurst's *The Line of Beauty*	The Criterion: An International Journal in English, Vol. 8, Issue V, 2017	596-604

iii. Has the progress been according to original plan of work and towards achieving the objective. if not, state reasons

Yes. The progress of the project is according to the original plan

iv. Please enclose a summary of the findings of the study. One bound copy of the final report of work done may also be sent to the concerned Regional Office of the UGC.

Summary of the findings of the study is enclosed herewith. One bound copy of the final report of work done is submitted to the Western Regional Office of UGC, Pune.

v. Any other information: Nil

Dr.N.K.Patil
Principal Investigator
MRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

Principal
(Seal)
Principal
R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalay
Chandgad Tal Chandgad Dist

Annexure-VII

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI – 110 002

PROFORMA FOR SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION AT THE TIME OF SENDING THE FINAL REPORT OF THE WORK DONE ON THE PROJECT

1.	Title of the Project	:	**Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao**
2.	Name and Address of the Principal Investigator	:	**Dr. NAMDEV KASHINATH PATIL** At/Post: Hajagoli, Tal: Chandgad, Dist: Kolhapur - 416507
3.	Name and Address of the Institution	:	**R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya, Chandgad** **Tal: Chandgad, Dist: Kolhapur (MS)**
4.	UGC approval Letter No. and Date	:	**No. 23-1421/14 (WRO), dated on 20/02/2015**
5.	Date of Implementation	:	**01/04/2015**
6.	Tenure of the Project	:	**Two Years**
7.	Total Grant Allocated	:	**Rs. 1,05,000/-**
8.	Total Grant Received	:	**Rs. 87,500/-**
9.	Final Expenditure	:	**Rs. 1,06,539/-**
10.	Title of the Project	:	**Reflections on Queer Culture: A Comparative Study of the Select Novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao**
11.	Objectives of the Project	:	The primary objectives of the present research project are to understand the recent developments in Queer theory and to prepare the theoretical framework to analyse the select novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao. The study aims to make an overarching and all encompassing statement on the select novels of the select writers in the light of queer theoretical conceptions in order to focus on the socio-political, cultural, economical, and philosophical articulations and alterations in the queer field.
12.	Whether Objectives Were Achieved	:	The objectives of the project are achieved as it puts forth the homo-erotic world that lies in the heart of the straight, heterosexual society. It focuses on the problems of gender

	(Give Details)		identity which is unable to explain the behavioural patterns of the sexual categories. It provides, through the assessment of the characters of select novels, different angle to probe into the lives of gay men.
13.	Achievements from the Project	:	The present research project proved to be fruitful as it throws light on the queer world of the men who lives in and according to the norms of straight society. The select novels demonstrate the desires of the gay men to love and to be loved by the other men. They point out the world within world which is unspoken. The study brings to notice the need for separate identity and acceptance of society to the gay life of homosexual men. The socio-political upheavals and human longing explored in the light of queer aspects certainly contribute to the ever-growing canvas of literature.
14	Summary of the Findings (In 500 Words)	:	**Attached Separately**
15.	Contribution to the Society (Give Details)	:	The present research project is a significant documentation over the shifting cultural boundaries in general and changing queer cultural patterns in specific. It unravels the socio-cultural upheavals and the human being, ambivalent in his response to and trapped in altered social conditions. The characters of the select novels live according to the norms of the heterosexual society; but at the same time, they try to escape from the brutal world and seek pleasure in gay world. Homosexuality, for them, has not only the means of enjoyment, but it has also become the way of escaping from the alienation and social inferiority, and a tool that provides security. The novels point out the hope that there exists another world which can provide the way to meaningful life.
16.	Whether any Ph.D. enrolled/ produced out of the Project	:	**No**
17.	No. of publications out of the Project (Please Attach)	:	**Two** (Copies of published paper are attached separately)

Patil
Dr.N.K.Patil
Principal Investigator
Principal Investigator
MRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

Principal
(Seal)
Principal
R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya
Chandgad,Tal.Chandgad Dist.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT

REFLECTIONS ON QUEER CULTURE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE SELECT NOVELS OF ALAN HOLLINGHURST AND R. RAJ RAO

SUBMITTED TO

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE,
PUNE – 411 007

FILE NO. 23-1421/14 (WRO), DATED 20th FEBRUARY, 2015

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Dr. NAMDEV KASHINATH PATIL

M. A., M. Phil., Ph. D.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH,
R. B. MADKHOLKAR MAHAVIDYALAYA, CHANDGAD

APRIL 2017

SUMMARY OF THE MINOR RESEARCH PROJECT

FOR THE PERIOD – 1ST APRIL, 2015 TO 31ST MARCH, 2017

The present minor research project deals with the assessment of the select novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao in the premises of queer culture. The project begins with the introduction to the study and the life and works of the select writers. It also makes clear the objectives, scope, limitations and methodology of the study. The first chapter provides theoretical framework by reviewing brief history of the origin and development of queer theory in the socio-political, philosophical and literary context. It puts forth the definitions of queer theory in the light of thoughts and debates developed so far in the field. In order to understand the philosophical perceptions of the queer theory, it takes a brief review of Michel Foucault's arguments about sexual acts and its perception in the society. It then surveys the intellectual discussions of Judith Butler, who brings to forth gender as merely performance which should allow the people to take any role suitable for them. It discusses the perceptions of Eve Sedgwick about the hidden layers of human mind; and of Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant, who have challenged the idea of heteronormative. Finally it throws light on the ideas of Lee Edelman, who sees queer as a death drive, and Judith Jack Halberstam, who assesses queer as a failure.

The second chapter deals with the analysis of the select novels of Alan Hollinghurst in order to shed light on the reflections of queer culture articulated through the homosexual scenes. The novel *The Swimming Pool Library* presents homosexual love relations of wealthy, handsome and twenty five years old gay person William Beckwith. He establishes number of gay sexual relations with different men which reveal his attraction towards the physique of other men. He

is deeply in love with Arthur, a seventeen years old black boy, who seems to be very appealing for him and who always dominates his thoughts for sex. However, when Arthur leaves him, he is attracted towards Phil, who becomes his intimate gay friend. He tells Phil that in his school days, the prefect men were called as librarian; and as he was perfect in swimming, he was called as swimming-pool librarian, which further points out the suitability of the title to the life of William, who is perfect man in the gay field. The chapter then throws light on revelation of queer culture in *The Line of Beauty*. The novel points out the development of homosexual life of its protagonist Nick, who finds tribulations in his gay as well as straight life because of the money minded political world. Hence, in spite of his promise to the Fedden family, he establishes homosexual relations with Leo, which seems to be momentous for him. The formative years of Nick's life are confined by his modesty and natural fastidiousness which is shed off in the course of time as he meets Wani and has learned to live a double way of life which allows him to switch between the heterosexual world and homosexual world.

The third chapter deals with the analysis of the select novels of R. Raj Rao in the premises of queer culture. In the novel *The Boyfriend*, homosexual gay relations of its protagonist Yudi are projected, who is involved in gay sex with varied persons at different places. However, soon he finds his boyfriend Milind and intends to have life-long homosexual relations with him. He accepts marginal position for the sake of love and even offers money to Milind, which he usually does not in his gay relations with other men. When he feels alienation and thinks for the compassionate partner in his life, he does not think of woman, but looks for his lost boyfriend which shows his queerness. Similarly, the novel *Hostel Room 131* unfolds homosexual desires of its gay protagonist Siddharth who is madly in love with Sudhir, his soul mate. Siddharth meets Sudhir in the

room number 131 of Engineering College Hostel, where the charming beauty of Sudhir fascinates him; and as a result, they continue to ride high on the gay sex. However, their homosexual life is exposed that leads them to set apart and lead their lives independently. As the tendency of heterosexual society does not allow relations between men, Sudhir opts for the sex reassignment surgery so that he can unite forever with his lover Siddharth.

The fourth chapter compares the thematic articulations, characters representation and writing styles of both Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao on the basis of queer cultural conceptions. The select novels of both writers are filled with graphic homosexual scenes which are delineated with sensuousness and freedom of writing style. Both writers have presented the theme of queer culture through cruising of men and the erotic gay sex. Along with homosexuality, the theme of class conflict is also evidenced as the protagonists of the select novels of belong to upper class and prefer gay sexual relations with persons belonged to lower class community. The class conflict is further coupled with the conflict between homosexual and heterosexual tendencies presenting the power exercised by straight society over sexual discourses.

The fifth chapter concludes the research work with some of the major findings. The select novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao successfully demonstrate queer cultural perceptions of its characters, who intend to choose the gender role of their own choice rather than it is assigned by the social codes. The novels also demonstrate class conflict between upper and lower class communities, homosexual and heterosexual categories which try to control and dominate the lives of the people. The characters of the select novels also find a sense of satisfaction and security in the homosexual world.

Thus, the select novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao succeed in presenting queer culture through the lives of its characters. William in *The Swimming Pool Library* openly accepts his gayness, Nick in *The Line of Beauty* rejects the lavish and fascinating straight world for the sake of homosexuality, Yudi in *The Boyfriend* prefers to spend his whole life with his boyfriend, and Siddharth in *Hostel Room 131* chooses Sudhir, his soul mate even after his sex reassignment surgery. The characters of the select novels step beyond the bare outlines of homosexual and heterosexual social constructs in order to expose their hidden desires. However, the characters of Hollinghurst openly accept and disclose that they are gay; on the other hand, the characters of R. Raj Rao try to hide their gayness and keep secret their homosexual affairs.

The class conflict observed in the select novels of both the writers divides the characters in two roles viz. active and passive roles. The characters belonged to sophisticated upper class always take an active role in cruising gay men or in the homosexual pleasures and the characters belonged to the lower class becomes submissive and always take passive role during the sexual intercourse. The superior class characters dominate and control the lives of lower class characters, who are ultimately pushed to the marginal position in gay relations. Furthermore, the class conflict depicts efforts of heterosexual society, which tries to control the homosexual desires and love relations. However, the influence of straight white cultural, social codes seem to be evading in the wake of queer culture.

The characters of the select novels find homosexuality as a way to escape from the loneliness of life. William feels alienation when Arthur leaves him, Nick finds isolation in the absence of Leo, Yudi experiences loneliness when he

lost Milind, and Siddharth suffers with alienation when he is separated from Sudhir. On the other hand, all the characters experience a kind of satisfaction and security in the homoerotic lives. However, the geographical boundaries play great role in the perceptions of characters about the homosexual desires. William and Nick are aware about the fact that there are no constrains over the gay sex in the society where they live; whereas Yudi and Siddharth are aware that homosexuality is against the social codes of the Indian society which leads them to hide their gay relations before straight people.

Thus, the select novels of Alan Hollinghurst and R. Raj Rao succeed in demonstrating queer culture with the emotional complexities of the homosexual characters in the premises of heterosexual society. They fuse together the socio-political issues such as AIDS, social identity with homosexuality in order to reveal the tendencies of people about sexual orientation. They drive their characters, in the select novels, to probe into the past and re-evaluate their lives in the context of family and society. They effectively unfold the passions and oppressions of gay men with a lavishness of homoerotic scenes in a graceful and effectively balanced writing style.

Dr.N.K.Patil
Principal Investigator
MRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

Principal
(Seal)
R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya

October 2017
Vol. VI, Issue- I

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UGC Approved Journal
Sr. No. 200, Journal No.44813

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A Peer-reviewed (refereed) International Journal
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Editors

P. A. Attar H. B. Patil

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Gay Culture Reflected in Hollinghurst's *The Swimming Pool Library*

Dr. Namdev Kashinath Patil*

Abstract:

The present paper focuses on the gay culture reflected in Allan Holinghurst's novel *The Swimming Pool Library*, which unravels the life of wealthy gay men with all passions and emotions. It unfolds the friendship between two men and their complicated response to the situations in which they are trapped which leads one of them to re-examine his family background and assess his emotional world in the light of the life-events of another. Using enchanting style, Hollinghurst observes sensational world with the meticulous selection of events in the lives of William Beckwith, the protagonist of the novel, and Lord Nantwich, the old and rich man; who accidently meet together while William was cruising a boy.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the conception of queer culture; the second section analyses the novel; and the third section sums up with concluding remarks.

Keywords: gay, queer, homosexuality, sex, erotic pleasures, homoerotic Love, etc.

Section I

Queer theory is a relatively recent and evolving school of criticism, which questions and problematizes the issues of gender identity and sexual orientation in literary texts. It has been developed out of the concerns of feminist conceptions of gender issues and investigations of gay and lesbian studies regarding sexual identities. It not only covers the topics of bisexual, lesbian and gay subjects, but also focuses on the topics such as intersex, gender ambiguity, gender-corrective surgery, cross-dressing, etc. It claims to understand sexuality in terms of shifting boundaries, ambivalences, and cultural constructions in socio-cultural and historical contexts. It challenges heterosexuality, which is traditionally considered as the natural sexual norm

* **Assistant Professor, Department of English, R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya, Chandgad (MS)**

in the society, to bring forth the strange and unsettled sexual behaviour which is binary to the hegemonic ideology.

Since the emergence of the queer theory, number of philosophers focused on the representation of the sexual identities. They addressed whether individuals of changing sexual introductions had the same political objectives, and whether those in the sexual minority felt that they could be spoken to alongside others of various sexualities and introductions. As a result, the term is, as Brooker composes, "revised, dispelled, rendered obsolete to the extent that it yields to the demands which resist the term precisely because of the exclusions by which it is mobilized" (19). French philosopher Michel Foucault concentrates his thoughts on the three zones where the systems of power need to change. They are law, the right to speak freely, and codes of sexual ethical quality. He believes in new dynamic ways at the primary level to deconstruct the traditional power constructions established by the new Victorians. His arguments about power and its control shaped new theoretical grounds. He writes that "we will not be able to free ourselves from it except at a considerable cost: nothing less than a transgression of laws, a lifting of prohibitions, an irruption of speech, a reinstating of pleasure within reality" (45). Foucault's thoughts are quite revealing in the area of queer culture. However, it is not possible to deal thoroughly with the concept of queer culture in this paper as it would widen the scope.

Section II

Alan Hollinghurst is a significant writer writing in the present era. His novels are remarkable for their subtle depiction of the emotional world with particularity. His novel *The Swimming Pool Library* opens with William Beckwith, the protagonist, who lives in London. He is twenty five years old and wealthy man as he has received a huge estate of his grandfather Viscount Beckwith who was a statesman of London. William is the perfect example and representative of sophisticated upper-class society, who need not think about the daily livelihood. He is well educated and handsome young man who always tries to maintain his body with regular exercise. However, he has an excessive drinking habit and being a gay man, he is always busy in casual but frequent sexual relationships. He continuously searches for the sexual

pleasures and therefore the bodies of other men are the centre of his attention.

William has numbers of successful homosexual affairs with various men including Arthur, a working class black teenage boy, and Phil, a waiter in the hotel. He always thinks about sex whenever he sees the other men, especially the lower class men. It can be witnessed in the beginning of the novel, when he encounters a couple of London Transport maintenance men and is drawn towards the thirty-five years old severely handsome black man. He feels "more than respect, a kind of tenderness for him. I imagined his relief at getting home and taking his boots off and going to bed as the day brightened around the curtains and the nose of the streets built up outside" (1-2). He is sexually attracted towards the black man and intends to have a sex with him. When he is thinking about the sexual relations, he notices the pale gold wedding ring band in the hands of the black man and then his thoughts of having sex with him disappear from his mind.

William's sexual encounters with Arthur clearly show his preoccupations with physical attractions to other men. When he is going back to home, there are only the thoughts of sex with Arthur. It can be observed in the novel when he writes that "the idea of Arthur, too, which I had suppressed to make it all the more exciting when I recalled it," reveals the way he tries to suppress his thoughts of sex with Arthur (2). In his excitements, he thinks of Arthur as:

> . . . before I found my beautiful, cocky, sluttish Arthur – as Arthur it was impossible to imagine old. His smooth face, with its huge black eyes and sexily weak chin, was always crossed by the light and shade of uncertainty, and met your gaze with the rootless self-confidence of youth. (2)

The seventeen years Arthur's body seems to be very appealing to William. He imagines Arthur to be alone in his flat looking his pictures in the swimming costume, which would have created erotic feelings in him. In the thoughts of Arthur, William reaches to home and consumes sex with Arthur, which is thoroughly expressed here in the novel as:

> I kissed him, my left hand sliding between his high, plump buttocks while with the other I stroked the back of his head. Oh,

> the ever-open softness of black lips; and the strange dryness of the knots of his pigtails, which crackled as I rolled them between my fingers, and seemed both dead and half erect. (3)

Sex with Arthur gives William a kind of satisfaction and he feels as if he is "riding high on sex and self-esteem – it was my time, my *belle époque* – but all the while with a faint flicker of calamity . . . something seen out of the corner of the eye" (4). Being a rich man, he need not to work or care for his livelihood. He has everything – education, upper class, physical beauty, sophisticated culture, etc. which further helps him to enjoy his life.

William strolls through the London Park in order to cruise a young man, where he spots a lone Arab boy and instantly attracts towards him. The strong urge to have a sex with the boy leads William to chase a boy. While pursuing the boy, he enters in the public toilet and decides to wait for that boy to come there. Meanwhile, he comes across some older men who have lodged there. All of sudden one of the older men perchance received a minor heart attack and fall down on ground. William rushes to help the suffering man and in order to save his life attempts different ways including artificial respiration. He remembered the exercises in the school of using artificial respiration to save the life of casualty: "I gripped his nose with two fingers and inhaling deeply, sealed my lips over his. I saw with a turn of the head his chest swell" (11). He is aware that he has brought a man to life from his death.

After the incident William returns to home where he discovers Arthur in horrified condition. Soon he comes to know that Arthur was involved in a quarrel with Harold, his big brother and his friend. The argument between them about the drugs leads Arthur to kill Harold's friend accidently and consequently Arthur is wounded and bleeding. He further tells William that he cannot go back to his house as his brother will kill him. Therefore, William decides to protect Arthur and provides him shelter. The terrific condition of Arthur and the frightened William feel alienation in the house. In fact the feeling of loneliness leads them to involve in the homosexual relationships. It is clearly witnessed in the relationships between William and Arthur:

> Sex took on an almost purgative quality, as if after hours of intertia and evasion we could burn off our unspoken fears in vehement, wordless activity. Sex came to justify his presence

> there, to confirm that we were not just two strangers trapped together by a fateful mistake. (41)

Sex has become the only tool to get rid off from the alienation for the two men. It has also becomes a symbol of security as both feel protected, and especially Arthur. Sex with Arthur becomes a daily routine matter for William: "once these practical measures had been taken that the impractical day after day of Arthur and me in the flat began" (43). Arthur finds himself confined in the company of William, which leads him to live most of the time in loneliness. To avoid this loneliness and the tensions of being caught in the murder case, occasionally William and Arthur are involved in an abusive sex. It shows that homosexuality can provide the other world free from the tensions of the everyday world.

William's possession of the Arthur is not only his attempt to find security, but it is also an attempt of ruling class to dominate the lower class. He states:

> I was eight years older than Arthur, and our affair had started as a crazy fling with all the beauty for me of his youngness and blackness. Now it became a murky business, a coupling in which we both exploited each other, my role as protector mined by the morbid emotion of protectiveness. I saw him becoming more and more my slave and my toy, in a barely conscious abasement which excited me even as it pulled me down. (*ibid*)

The master-slave relationships between William and Arthur are seen in the way they accept each other. Arthur's awareness of being guilty for the murder of his brother's friend Tony makes him submissive to his present master. On the other hand, William's role of protector gives him an authority to dominate Arthur. William knows that he is living with a man who is a murder and can be dangerous for him any time. Besides this, there are chances of being arrested in the murder case. He expresses his feelings as:

> It did not take me long to fear the consequences to myself of any of these possible events. If it had not been for our week of love I would perhaps have been frightened of Arthur too; but I was never even critical of his crime. A rare, unjustified trust kept me on his side. (47)

It is the homosexual love that gives a security to both William and Arthur. His feeling of love overcomes his awareness about the possible consequences. He has not even tried to think critically over the crime of Arthur. The homosexual pleasures lead him to take the side of Arthur.

William, in his attempt to escape from the loneliness, goes to the cinema based on the gay pornography where he involves in the anonymous sex. While he is watching a movie, a boy sat down next to him and begins to stare at him. The boy intends "to try and make out [his] face in the darkness, and [he] felt his breath on [his] cheek. Then there was the pressure of his shoulder against [him]" (73). He escapes himself from the boy and moves to the empty place on the other side. After some time a group of half dozen boys comes there; one of them sits beside him. He observed the boy and comes to the conclusion that the boy may be watching the porn movie for the first time. Then he tries to establish sexual relations with the boy, who is now confused and remains passive in his response. Therefore, he forces the boy to have a sex:

> I continued stroking the back of his neck, thinking it might relax him, but he kept on feeling my dick in a very polite sort of way, so I brought pressure to bear, and pushed his head firmly down my lap. He had to struggle around to get his stocky form into a new position, encumbered by the padded arm between our seats; but once there he took the crown of my cock into his mouth and with me moving his head puppet-like up and down, sucked it after a fashion. (75)

He feels something thrilling, an electric intensity. However, the boy's apparent defiance leads him to stop his behaviour. Yet whatever he did with the boy gives him the feeling of satisfaction as if he has a random sex. Then the boy goes out and on the staircase, he recognises the boy as the light sheds on him. He comes to know that the boy is, in fact, Phil, one of the members from the Corry.

William decided to meet Lord Charles Nantwich and goes to his home, in a street off Huggin Hill. Lord Nantwich shows William the Roman mosaics in the basement of his house, where he asks William to write his biography for him. At first William feels that he is going to ask for something like physical pleasure. He feels that:

> . . . I am sure for a moment that he had some physical demand in mind. Would I let him take my clothes off, or kiss me. A don at Winchester had asked a friend of mine to masturbate in front of him, and though he didn't, such things harmlessly be done. (115)

However, Lord Nantwich asks him to write his biography. At first, William refuses to write as he thinks that it will come in his way of sexual life; but then he has realised that writing about someone will not be an obstacle in his consumption of the sex. Therefore, he accepts the proposal that, in the beginning, he will read journals that Lord Nantwich will send him. However, his research suffers because of his ignorance as the person like Lord Nantwich requires attention. He is the symbol of English homosexual people and their privileges and trials. He is also the representative of the sophisticated upper class society where the homosexual relations were considered as the illegal acts. On the other hand, William is the representative of the same society but in the altered situations where homosexual relations have got identity in the illegal way.

William is involved in Phil so much that he cannot live without him. He has even forgotten Arthur and has not felt his absence in his life since his disappearance. He expresses his feelings as: "It was only a few weeks since his disappearance and I had done nothing about him and already was so absorbed in someone else that I didn't even think of him for days at a stretch" (186-187). William talks with Phil about the Swimming-Pool Library as he was one of the librarians of the Swimming-Pool Library. He tells Phil that in his school-days the perfect persons were called as the librarian. During the period he was called as the Swimming-Pool Librarian as he was perfect in the swimming. He tells Phil about the swimming and also shows his Swimming-Pool Librarian badge which he has kept in a round leather stud-box. Then they go to the roof of the hotel, where they spread towels, lay down naked and take the sun bath: "We were very happy on the roof, sometimes reading, sometimes stroking and exciting each other . . . Phil would rub my tits . . . or send his fingertips over me more gently than tickling" (204). He is aware that he is obsessed with the body of Phil and every time intends to have sex with him. But he also notices a difference between the erotic pleasures of Phil and Arthur. He points out the difference between them as:

> [Phil] lacked the illiterate, curling readiness of Arthur, his instinct for sex. Both of them were teenagers over whom I had many advantages; both of them watched me for the moves I would make. But where with Arthur, when I did move, there was an immediate transport, a falling-open of the mouth, a mood of necessity that was close to possession, with Phil there was a more selfconscious giving, callow at times and imitative. When I was rough with him it was to break through all that. (206-206)

William finds the absence of readiness in Phil which is present in Arthur. Phil is affectionate but his affections cannot be called as his readiness of sex. He believes that Phil's shyness is responsible for his behaviour while having a sex.

In the home, William reads aloud the diaries of Lord Nantwich to Phil, and especially the section of his life, where the North African boy tries to sell him pornography consequently leading him to feel alienated in the foreign land. Then William and Phil go to The Shaft club, which is famous for homosexuality. They meet various gay men including a bodybuilder belonged to the Brazil. William finds there Arthur in the bathroom and tries to have sex, subsequently resulting in frustration as Arthur now works for Harold.

William, while reading the diaries of Lord Nantwich, comes to know that Lord Nantwich has suffered a lot when he was arrested in his attempt of having a sex with a policeman. When the African boy with whom he has sexual relations, got married, he became frustrated and began to go to anonymous club for sex. While cruising in the bathroom, he was arrested for his indecency in the public place. His condition becomes more worse when one politician tried to exploit the situation, who incidentally happens to be the grandfather of William. He also comes to know that Bill was also arrested for his homosexual relations with a three years younger boy. William, who has learnt the past of his grandfather, now decides to do not write the biography of Lord Nantwich because he has also homosexual relations and he has been brought up in the gay environment.

William visits to the hotel in which Phil works, where he meets a rich Argentine man, who offers him sex. At first, he accepts the proposal, but as he discovers that the man is preoccupied with gay conventions, he rejects his

proposal. He goes upstairs and finds that Phil is engaged with Bill in having sex. William is confused with the incident and leaves the place. He goes to the Corinthian Club where Lord Nantwich exposes his purpose of giving diaries to him. In the end of the novel, William goes to a film with James.

Section III

The novel pin points the incidents in the life of William Beckwith who only wants to have homoerotic pleasures in his life. There is nothing important for him except than the bodies of other men. He even does not want to be disturbed in his sexual enjoyments and therefore avoids writing for the old man Lord Nantwich. However, the past life of Lord Nantwich reveals him the sufferings in the lives of gay men during the period of Labouchère Amendment where homosexuality was a crime. He also comes to the realization of his family background, revealing him the political career of his grandfather. In the end, the gay William is shown as an ambivalent in his response towards the homosexuality.

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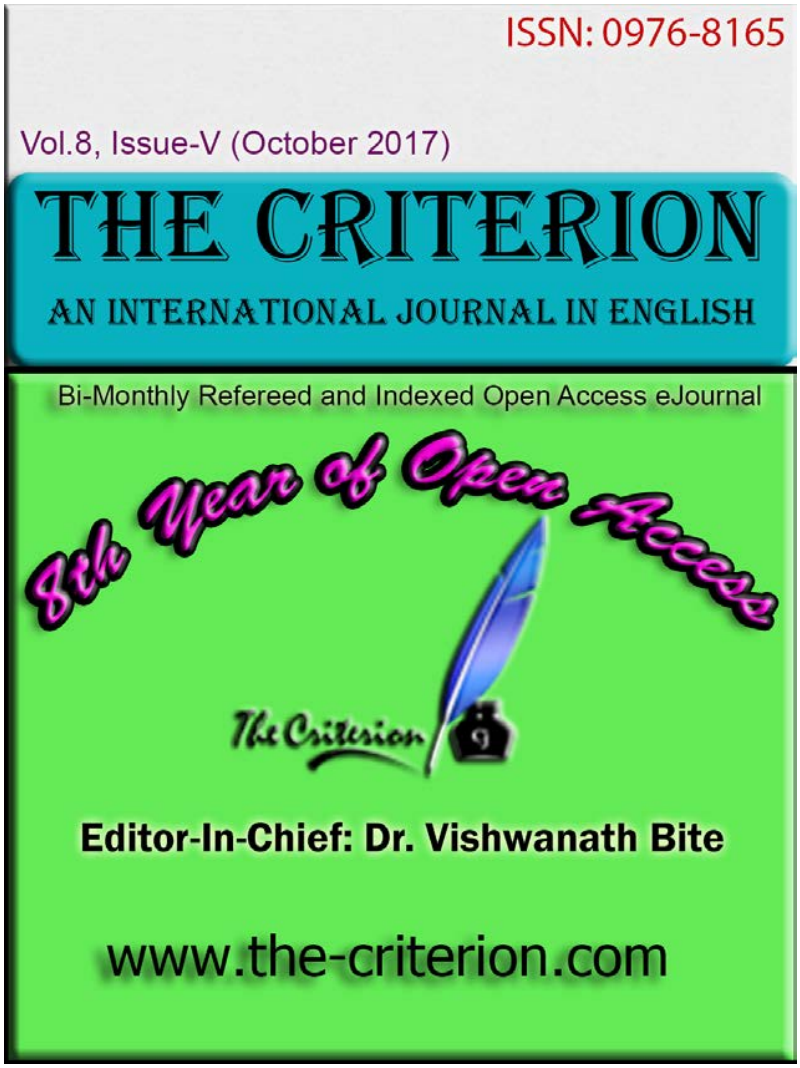

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Homosexuality in Hollinghurst's *The Line of Beauty*

Dr. Namdev Kashinath Patil
Assistant Professor,
Department of English,
R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya,
Chandgad.

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Abstract:

The present paper focuses on the homosexuality represented in Alan Hollinghurst's novel The Line of Beauty. Published in the year 2004, the novel won Man Booker Prize for its rich texture, emotional appeal, and charming comic way of delineating events. The novel unfolds the life of a twenty years old protagonist Nick Guest, who is living in an attic room in the house of a famous political man Gerald Fedden. Nick comes across various problems while establishing his sexual relations with different gay men. The homosexual desires and the constant moral pressure of being a part of the straight society is coupled with the politics during the government of Thacher.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section deals with the theoretical conceptions of homosexuality; the second section analyses the novel from the perspective of homosexuality; and the third section concludes the paper with concluding remarks.

Keywords: Homosexuality, gay, sex, The Line of Beauty, erotic pleasures, etc.

Section I

Coined in the 19th century by a German psychologist Karoly Maria Benkert, the term homosexuality focuses on the same sex attractions. Homosexuality is an old term, the roots of which can be found in ancient Greece. However, the ways of representing homosexuality were diverse at that time. The concept of homosexuality, in real terms, was redefined in the 20th century as the premarital sexual relations and sexual identities have become more important in the period. Homosexuality becomes the way of examining the association among power distribution and identification; and at the same time, tries to understand the diverse facades of repression and privilege. It goes beyond merely sexual identification of the genders and provides an applicable framework to investigate various issues in relations to a social hegemony and marginalized self-resulted out of social practices and identity.

Since the emergence, many writers have tried to define homosexuality in different ways. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines homosexuality as the "sexual attraction or the tendency to direct sexual desire toward another of the same sex," which shows only sexual lust towards other men (www.merriam-webster.com). French philosopher Michel Foucault's ideas about homosexuality are quite revealing as he connects homosexuality with the society. He writes that "homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it

was transposed from the practice of sodomy into a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species" (43). Thus, homosexuality has emerged as a dominant concept in the critical discussions that focuses not only the sexual desires, but it focuses on identity constructions and the important shifts in power control. It is not possible to thoroughly discuss homosexuality in this research paper as it will widen the scope and divert the aim of analysing novel. In the following section, Allan Hollinghurst's novel, *The Line of Beauty* is analysed in order to point out homosexual desires and the various problems in consuming homoerotic love.

Section II

Allan Holinghurst's novel *The Line of Beauty* unfolds three different years in the life of Nicholas Guest, the protagonist of the novel. Set in the suburb areas of Britain, it covers incidents in the life of a young gay Nick, his middle-class background and his graduation from the college in Oxford. The first section of the novel is entitled as The Love-Chord which opens in the year of 1983 with Nick who is living in the attic room in the Fedden's house at Notting Hill.

In the emerging years of his life, Nick finds tribulations in living a successful life in the money minded political world and searches another way in the form of Fedden family to deal with the difficulties of his life. Toby, one of the members of Fedden family, is the best university friend of Nick. He takes this opportunity to enter in the Fedden house at the West London. Toby's father Gerald is a Member of Parliament in the government of Thatcher. Nick is instantly fascinated with the glamorous world of romance, money and power when he moves to the house.

Toby's parents give the responsibility of their daughter Catherine to Nick while they were going out as they are hesitant to leave her alone because she injures herself. During the period, Nick assists Catherine to come out from her crisis. When she tried to harm herself, Nick controls the circumstance and helps her to overcome her cutlery drawer. He politely holds her hand until she comes out from her trauma. The incident leads her to be emotionally attached with Nick; hence, her parents suggest him to stay with her. However, he is engaged homosexually with two men, which has become dangerous for his relationships. The projection of this scene (Catherine as a responsibility of Nick) in the novel, allows the writer to differ this novel from his other works as almost all novels of Holinghurst project erotic pleasures and especially homosexuality without women's interference. But in this novel, Catherine becomes an obstacle in Nick's relationships with the other men. It can be witnessed in the beginning of the novel, where he has a blind date at the eight o'clock in the evening, but he cannot go as he has to take care of Catherine. He just wonders about his date as "the hot August day was a shimmer of nerves, with little busy interludes of lustful dreaming" (4).

Nick intends to have homoerotic pleasures before Gerald and Rachel return from the France at the end of month. As his room is up in the roof, he thinks that he will take someone

to the house as if it were his own and show him everything there so that he can be very impressive. He has only company of Catherine in the house; therefore, he has lots of freedom to use the house. Sometimes, Toby comes back to the house who asks Nick about his sister. In fact, it was Toby, who has told Nick about the sickness of his sister when he was in the Oxford. He told him how "she used to . . . cut her arms, with a razor blade" (6). When Nick first visited the house, he observed that:

> On one forearm there were neat parallel lines, a couple of inches long, and on the other a pattern of right-angled scars that you couldn't help trying to read as letters; it might have been an attempt at the word ELLF. But they were long healed over, evidence of something that would otherwise be forgotten; sometimes she traced them abstractedly with a finger. (6-7)

The mental illness of Catherine gives an opportunity to Nick to live there. In fact, though Catherine is the owner of the house, he is an in-charge of house, who has a lot of space to use it in the absence of Catherine's parents and brother. The class-conflict, which is another dominant theme in the novel, is also evidenced in the beginning of the novel as when Nick is attracted towards the luxuriousness of the house, Catherine points out his attachment towards the furniture and paintings as an instinct of the lower class people:

> She was puzzled by his love of its pompous spaces, and mocked his knowledgeable attachment to the paintings and furniture. 'You're such a snob,' she said with a provoking laugh; coming from the family he was thought to be snobbish about, this was a bit of facer. (7)

Catherine's comments over the views of Nick reveal the difference between two classes viz. upper class and lower middle-class. Nick manages the situation and tells her that he attracts to every beautiful object.

Nick tells Catherine about his relationships with Leo Charles, twenty years old black boy from Willesden with whom he has homosexual relationships. However, he has been just waiting to consume his love relationships with Leo for a week. He cannot leave alone to Catherine because of her insanity and he feels her safety as his own responsibility. Yet, the thoughts of Leo are constantly in his mind. It is clearly evidenced when he goes downstairs to call the parents of Catherine and suddenly remembers about Leo: "as he left the room, he thought suddenly of Leo, and felt sure he was losing his only chance with him" (13). Realising that he is losing an opportunity to have sex, he calls Leo first and postpones his intention to call the parents of Catherine. When he calls Leo was having his dinner with his mother, therefore, their conversation becomes very formal and in the code language in which he tells Nick that he is going to Carnival and cannot meet tonight. Nick feels that he is losing Leo, who further tells him that he will meet next week. Though, Nick pretends that "all this was positive but feeling abruptly miserable and stiff in the face" (14). He knows that he is totally involved in Leo and his conversation can decide the future of his relationships.

Leo's promise of meeting next week seems to be a conspiracy to Nick; but he feels even it is beautiful. He feels sudden relief from his depression and begins to think about Leo, "how nice-looking he was, small but solid, clear-skinned and curly-headed. He could see Leo falling for him" (15). With these thoughts he goes to the communal garden with Catherine, where he can listen various voices including a man called Geoffrey who is making everyone laugh in the party nearby garden. There, once again, he is overpowered by the memories of Leo: "Nick yearned for Leo, away to the north, three miles up the long straight roads, but possibly anywhere" (19). His longingness leads him to imagine that someone is taking his photograph while having sex with Leo in the garden.

Nick usually tells Catherine his various romantic stories at Oxford which are merely imaginary tales as he had not consumed sex there even for once in his life. It is observed in the novel when Gerald asks Nick to have a dinner with them and he refuses as he has a date. He becomes reserved to open his heart to them and when Catherine tells about this he feels embarrassment. Catherine has a realisation about his less experience in having affairs:

> Nick had never been on a date with a man before, and was much less experienced that Catherine imagined. In the course of their long conversations about men he had let one or two of his fantasies assume the status of fact, had lied a little, and had left some of Catherine's assumptions about him unchallenged. His confessed but entirely imaginary seductions took on – partly through the special effort required to invent them and repeat them consistently – the quality of real memories. (26)

His imaginary tales have the quality of reality which confuses Catherine in her assumptions about him. Only in the last year at Oxford, he realised his interest in gay people and gay subjects. But as a novice, he fails to identify homosexual people as most of the time "he had used his new licence mainly to flirt with straight boys" (*ibid*). He is, in fact, attracted towards Toby during this period, but his efforts were useless as Toby is a straight man who believes in heterosexuality. His feelings are exposed as:

> His heart was given to Toby, with whom flirting would have been inappropriate, almost sacrilegious. He wasn't quite ready to accept the fact that if he was going to have a lover it wouldn't be Toby, or any other drunk straight boy hoping the fence, it would be a gay lover – that compromised thing that he himself would then become. (*ibid*)

His initial attraction towards the heterosexual straight men shows his inability to judge and identify gay men. He is unable to establish sexual relations with the girls; hence he has created his own world of imaginary tales, "his inner theatre of sexual make-believe," where he often escapes and the stories that now he tells to Catherine (*ibid*). After a long time, he finds his first successful date in the form of Leo which is very much important for him: "So meeting with Leo, pursued through all the obstacles of the system which alone made it possible, was momentous for Nick" (*ibid*). He goes out with the thoughts that all that he is

doing is for the sake of pleasures. However, he intends to be loved rather than making love to someone else. It is evidenced when his feelings are expressed as: "Nick's ambition was to be loved by a handsome black man in his late twenties with a racing bike and a job in local government. This was the one thing he wasn't going to be able to admit to Leo himself" (27).

Nick goes to meet Leo at a bar called Chepstow Castle, which he has chosen purposefully for its shadowy semi-privacy, where he can give results to his plans of homosexuality. As he enters the bar, he spots Leo and approaches him. Leo finds the atmosphere of the bar bad and perhaps dangerous for them. Therefore, Nick takes Coke for both of them. He needs some courage, so he adds rum to his Coke. After all it is the time for him to bring his fantasy in reality:

> His mind held the floating image of the man he had longed to meet, whom he had touched for a moment and left outside in all his disconcerting reality. He was too sexy; he was too much what he wanted, in his falling-down jeans and this tight blue shirt. Nick was worried by his obvious intention to seduce, or at least to show his capacity for seduction. (28)

There is no space to sit down in the bar, therefore, they prefer to stand up and lean against the window. Nick could not open his mind completely to Leo, so they begin to talk about each other. At first, Leo thinks that Nick is the one of the members of Fedden family, but soon Nick clarifies that though Fedden's is not his family, but it is like a second family to him. Leo tells that he is just kidding to him and squeezes his shoulder that makes him to feel some current passing in his body: "He saw absurdly relieved. A charge passed into him through Leo's figures, and he saw the two of them kissing passionately, in a rush of imagination that was as palpable as this awkward pavement rendezvous" (31). It is the first experience of gayness for Nick, therefore he is very nervous about his date. They spend half an hour in the bar; and now Nick feels a kind of excitement in the company of his new friend. He becomes more sure with the turning of street lamps from the pink to gold that "it was going to work out. He felt nervous, slightly breathless, but at the same time buoyant, as if a lonely responsibility had been taken off him" (32). Meanwhile a couple of benches becomes free, so they sit on one of them leaning towards each other as if they are playing a game. Nick begins to wonder what will be the perceptions of the heterosexual people, who are sitting around them, about their relationships. He also thinks that Leo may have his dates with other men in the gay pub and begins to regret for his selection of this place. In fact, he imagines some freedom where he can "stroke Leo's cheek and kiss him, with a sigh of surrender" (*ibid*).

Nick realises that it is almost difficult to entertain Leo with his own affairs. Besides he is reserved man who has no experience of sex as he himself admits: "'I'm the sort f guy who likes Pope more than Wordsworth', 'I'm crazy about sex but I haven't had it yet'" (33). On the other hand, Leo is very frank in his approach who openly admits that he loves to have a sex: "'I'm the sort of guy who needs a lot of sex', he said, and, 'I'm like that, I always say what I think'" (*ibid*). Leo's statements about his acknowledgement of being gay leads to remember Foucault's assertion in his *The History of Sexuality* (1996) that "I am homosexual"

(369). Nick's modesty and natural fastidiousness confines him to respond Leo in the same style. However, Leo's open mindedness adds more excitement and Nick begins to love the hard self-confidence of his date. With the third peg of rum, Nick's feelings are half-aroused and he looks "undisguisedly at Leo's lips and neck and imagined unbuttoning the shiny blue short-sleeved shirt that cut so tightly under his arm" (33-34). Leo does not want to go late to the home, hence, he asks Nick to go to his place where they can consume their love. But Nick was aware that he cannot take Leo to the Fedden's house, especially when Gerald and Rachel are present as it can spoil his relationships with them. His fear is expressed as:

> Nick winced and waited – the truth was he didn't dare, he just couldn't do that to Rachel and Gerald, it was vulgar and unsafe, the consequences unspooled ahead of him, their happy routines of chortling agreement would wither for ever. (34-35)

Nick has promised to the Fedden that he will not establish homosexual relationships as it is vulgar and unsafe act which does not fit in the heterosexual social codes. Instead of going to the Fedden house, Nick wants to go to the house of Leo, who obviously turns down the proposal as his mother is very religious minded. It is for the first time Nick observes some kind embarrassment in Leo's face:

> Nick saw that he was embarrassed. 'My old lady's at home.' This first hint of shyness and shame, and the irony that tried to cover it, cockneyfied and West Indian too, made Nick want to jump on him and kiss him. 'She is dead religious,' Leo said, with a short defeated chuckle.
>
> 'I know what you mean,' said Nick. So there they were, two men on a summer night, with nowhere to call their own. (35)

Nick and Leo both are aware that they cannot go either to the place of Nick or to the house of Leo. Their realisation leads them to decide that they will have the homoerotic pleasures at the garden behind Fedden's house. It is a private garden only giving access to the local residents. Luckily, Nick has the keys of the garden. As they entered the garden, Nick wants "to hold Leo and kiss him at once; but he wasn't quite certain. Bumshoving was unambiguous, and encouraging, but not romantic exactly . . ." near the darkness of shrubbery (36). Then they go inside the garden, where the composts are kept. With the hotness of the composts, they begin to feel warmness of each other. Suddenly Leo takes the hand of Nick and begins to slide it round his waist. He puts his arm round Nick's neck and pulls him close towards him:

> . . . the unguessed softness of his lips touched his cheeks and neck, while Nick sighed violently and ran his hand up and down on Leo's back. He pushed his mouth towards Leo's, and they met, and hurried into a kiss. To Nick it felt simply like a helpless admission of need, and the shocking thing was the proof of Leo's need, in the force and thoroughness with which he worked on him. . . . He felt the coaxing caress of Leo's hand on the back of his head, roaming

> through the curls there, and lifted his other hand to stroke Leo's head, so beautifully alien in its hard stubbly angles and the dry dense firmness of his heir. (38)

Finally Nick consumed his love relationships with Leo. After finishing the activity, all of a sudden Nick realises that it is very dangerous to have homosexual relations in the open places. He is disturbed "for a moment at the thought of himself out here in the dark with a stranger, the risk of it, silly little fool, anything could happen" (39). With these thoughts, Nick leaves the garden along with Leo.

Nick becomes obsessive in having a sex with Leo and wanders to various places; however, he is also possessed by the visions in which he finds himself in the garden, where he is exposed while having a sex. His involvement and his vision clearly show his state of mind as:

> Nick was more and more seriously absorbed, but then just before he came he had a brief vision of himself, as if the trees and bushes had rolled away and all the lights of London shone in n him: little Nick Guest from Barwick, Don and Dot Guest's boy, fucking a stranger in a Notting Hill garden at night. Leo was right, it was so bad, and it was so much the best thing he'd ever done. (40)

His visions are, in fact, his attempts to escape into a private life from the public sphere. It is aptly revealed in one of his dreams where he finds two staircases separated by the wall in the country house. The public life of Nick is reflected in the form of service stairs which is narrow, "dangerously unrailed, under the bleak gleam of a skylight, each step worn down to a steep hollow, turned tightly in a deep grey shaft" (109). On the other hand the main staircase of the house is a way to the miracles of the life. He feels:

> . . . the great main sweep, a miracle of cantilevers, dividing and joining again, was hung with the portraits of prince-bishops, and had ears of corn in its wrought-iron banisters that trembled to the tread. It was glory at last, an escalation of delight, from which small doors, flush with the panelling, moved by levers below the prince-bishops' high-heeled and rosetted shoes, gave access, at every turn, to the back stairs, and their treacherous gloom. How quickly, without noticing, one ran from one to the other, after the proud White Rabbit, a well-known Old Harrovian porn star with a sphincter that winked as bells rang, crowds murmured and pigeons flopped about the dormer window while Nick woke and turned in his own little room again, in the comfortable anticlimax of home. (110)

Thus, Nick finds a way to switch between two worlds of private and public life. His private world of homosexuality is, in a way, an escalation of delight that gives access to other various small doors.

The feeling of loneliness is also evident in the novel; but gay world provides an opportunity to escape from the alienation. It is observed in the novel when Nick listens to the voice of Geoffrey from the balcony "whose regular tireless laughter had heightened his loneliness" (42). The memories of being with Leo give him some kind of relief from this loneliness. However, he cannot think to live without Leo whose absence he feels every time. It can be seen in his thoughts:

> It was his second night without Leo. He lay wide-eyed, dwelling on him in a state beyond mere thought, a kind of dazzled grief, in which everything they'd done together was vivid to him, and the strain of loss was as keen as the thrill of success. (44)

Nick feels more alienated as he finds himself confined to the household only and has not got any opportunity to move outside. To pass the time, he meets one of his friends from the Oxford called Wani Ouradi, a handsome young man and son of wealthy businessman. They begin to share the homosexual relations, but their relationships remain secrete as Wani is engaged with a woman called Martine. Despite being involved in the doctoral study over Henry James, Nick spends most of the time with Wani – having drugs and sex. While writing his thesis, he sustains his interest in film adaptation. Once at the time of dinner a guest at dinner asks Nick the contribution of Henry James to the society. Nick answers him:

> He'd have been very kind to us, he'd have said how wonderful and how beautiful we were, he'd have given us incredibly subtle things to say, and we wouldn't have realized until just before the end that he'd seen right through us (194).

His answer reveals the importance of literary world in the life of human beings. Wani also financially supports Nick in his studies and gives different expensive gifts. To hide their sexual relationships, Wani tells everyone that he has hired Nick on the editorial board of his magazine called Ogee in the post of consultant. The magazine's name is based on the Hogarth's line of beauty. This line of beauty is symbol for the double way of living life which allows the characters to switch between the heterosexual world and homosexual world. Nick expresses this double curve of his life as: "The double curve was Hogarth's 'line of beauty', the snakelike flicker of an instinct, of two compulsions held in one unfolding movement" (200). Wani is also helping Nick to write a screenplay of *The Spoils of Poynton*. Their friendship leads Nick to consume cocaine, another angle to that line of beauty which was introduced by Wani. Thus, the novel reveals the homosexual desires of Nick and his relationships with the Fedden's family, which finally he leaves as he is accused of destroying it purposefully.

Section III

The novel reveals the attempts of having homoerotic pleasures of its protagonist Nick Guest who is trapped in critical events because of his emotional involvement in the family

affairs of Fedden's family. Nick is always in search of an opportunity to consume sex with Leo and Wani. It is interesting to note that instead of loving, he wishes to be loved by other men. However, his superior race gives him an authority to remain at the powerful position. It is also remarkable that he is constantly aware about his lower social status in the company of powerful and wealthy men of his class or race.

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तपसा प्राप्यते यशः
Phone No-(02320)224661
Khedut Shiksahan Mandal's
R. B. Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya, Chandgad
Tal- Chandgad, Dist-Kolhapur (M.S.) 416509
(Affiliated to Shivaji University, Kolhapur)
Accredited By NAAC **"B"**
Email – rbmcollegechand@gmail.com , **Website-** www.rbmcollege.ac.in

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Principal Investigator
MRP No.F.23-1421/14(WRD)

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R.B.Madkholkar Mahavidyalaya
Chandgad,Tal.Chandgad